

28 July 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Helms

Information.

The last edition (3 Star) of the ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH of yesterday, 27 July, on page 2 A carried the following:

LETTER BY THE HEAD OF CIA CRITICIZED BY FULBRIGHT
Senator Questions Propriety of Praise for Editorial
by Richard Dudman, Washington Correspondent ST LOUIS POST-DISPATCH,
Washington, 27 July

Senator J. W. Fulbright questioned the propriety today of a letter written by Richard Helms, Director of CIA, to the ST. LOUIS GLOBE-DEMOCRAT. The letter published today praised an editorial "Brickbats for Fulbright" commenting on the defeat of the Arkansas Senator's proposal to expand Senate supervision of the CIA. Fulbright said it was rather unusual for a government employee to make such a comment. "I am very surprised that a professional CIA employee would so obviously enter a highly political controversy", Fulbright said. He asserted that the editorial praised by Helms was a complete distortion of what was really involved. "My interpretation of the action of the Senate was that it protected the CIA from any impartial, and I would say, objective surveillance."

"NO COMMENT" FROM THE CIA.

A spokesman for the CIA acknowledged that Helms had signed a letter July 18. He said the Agency would have no comment on the matter but that the ST. LOUIS POST DISPATCH was told that the letter was written by a subordinate of the CIA and that Helms signed it with the understanding that it was a friendly, personal letter and would not be published.

Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, urged the addition of members of the Foreign Relations Committee to the group that oversees the CIA. The special unit now includes ranking members of the Armed Services and Appropriations Committee. After a dispute in an unusual closed session, the Senate rebuked Fulbright's resolution by a vote of 61-28 to send it to the Armed Services Committee. The newspaper said that the proposal could have meant the end of the CIA if the Agency was subjected to the claws of the militant doves on Fulbright's committee.

REBUKE-PRASED

It praised the CIA as one of our most valuable agencies in foreign affairs and said that the Senate's proposal to rebuke Fulbright gave the CIA a full vote of confidence.